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IN THIS ISSUE

Irvin S. Cobb

Frank Woods

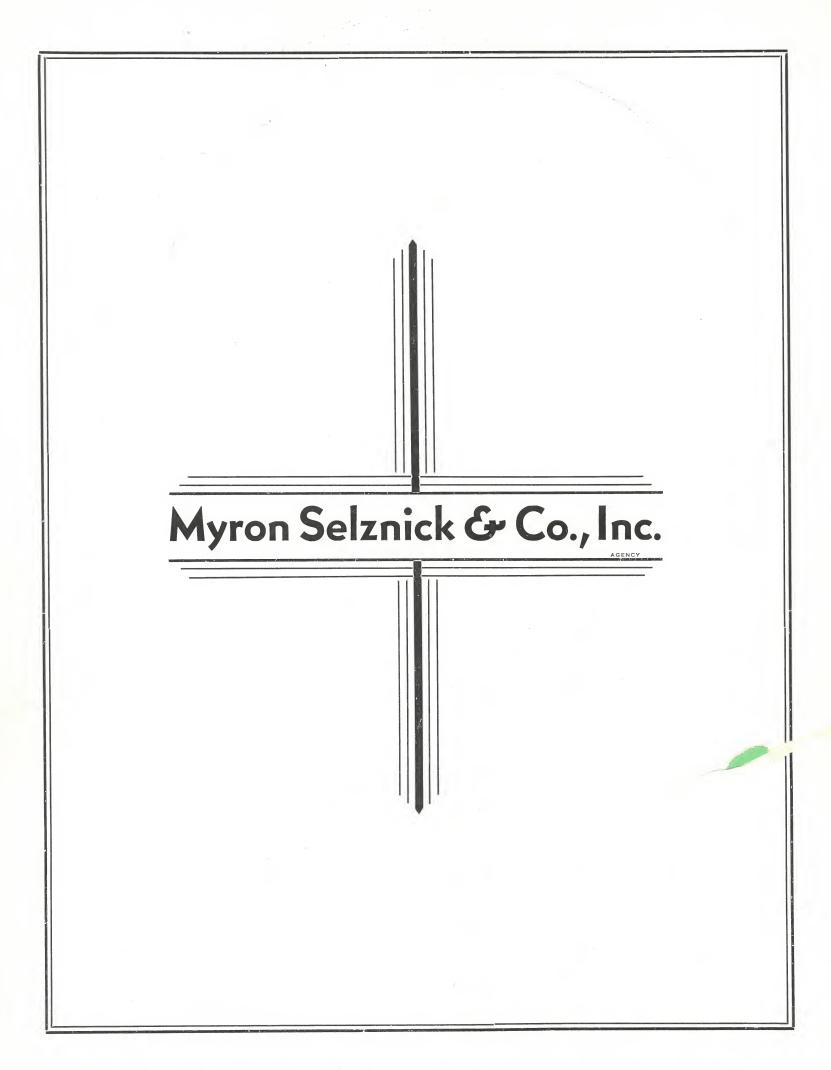
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Best Performance of October

SHOWING more interest in the vote than at any time to date, the members of the Screen Actors' Guild selected Edward Arnold's portrayal of Diamond Jim Brady in the Universal picture of the same name as the Best Performance of October. Seventeen players from eight pictures received one or more votes in the largest number of ballots since the Guild inaugurated this feature five months ago.

Closely following Edward Arnold in the count of votes, Katharine Hepburn won first Honorable Mention for her work as Alice Adams in the RKO-Radio Picture of the same name. Two other players from the same picture received more than one vote.

Miriam Hopkins again appears as one of the winners, having been voted second Honorable Mention for her creation of Mary Rutledge in the Samuel Goldwyn production, "Barbary Coast." In August, members of the Guild voted her performance in "Becky Sharp" the best of the month. As in the case of "Alice Adams," above, two other play-

ers from this picture received one or more votes.

INCLUDING the current month's releases, 171 pictures have figured in this poll since the first selections were made from the June releases. With the selection of three a month—the Best Performance and two Honorable Mention—fifteen winners already should have received awards. However, because of the tie for first place in the August awards and the tie for Honorable mention in July, seventeen players have won recognition from fellow craftsmen.

As was hoped in the original plan, several members of the supporting casts received votes this month. However, none received enough votes to win either of the awards. So again we repeat what we said in July: "It must be remembered that your votes are not limited to 'big' pictures or stars. Members of supporting casts often furnish the finest performances although heretofore they have been largely neglected in any selections made."

Best Screen Play of October

F the 31 pictures released in Los Angeles during the month, only 11 received one or more votes for the Best Screen Play of October according to the ballots of members of The Screen Writers' Guild.

Short of an unanimous choice by only a few votes, the screen play of "Alice Adams" by Dorothy Yost, Mortimer Offner and Jane Murfin was selected as the best of the month. This RKO-Radio picture was based on the novel by Booth Tarkington.

Offner, a screen writer for a comparatively short time, wins the award with his first credit to appear on a motion picture. In the writing of "Alice Adams", however, he collaborated with two well-seasoned scenarists. Miss Murfin has written a large number of screen plays with "Roberta," "The Little Minister" and "The Fountain" being among her most recent. Miss Yost has collaborated on the screen plays for "Laddie," "The Gay Divorcee" and "A Dog of Flanders".

First Honorable Mention goes to Doris Malloy and Harry Clork for the adaptation, and Preston Sturges for the screen play and dialogue of "Diamond Jim." An adaptation of a novel by Parker Morrell, this picture was produced by Universal.

Sturges, a playwright before becoming a screen writer, recently has scripted "The Good Fairy" and "Thirty Day Princess." Clork and Miss Malloy have collaborated as a team on the screen plays of "Princess O'Hara" and "Mister Dynamite".

POR his work of alone writing the screen play of "She Married Her Boss," Sidney Buchman has been voted the second Honorable Mention. This picture adapted from the original by Thyra Samter Winslow, was produced by Columbia Pictures.

Buchman has written, either alone or in collaboration, the screen plays of "Love Me Forever", "Whom the Gods Destroy", "His Greatest Gamble" and "All of Me."

It is interesting to note the increasing interest being taken in these awards. In the past two months, votes received (Continued on Page 22)

Best Performance

Edward Arnold

as Diamond Jim Brady in
"DIAMOND JIM"
Produced by Universal Pictures Corp.

HONORABLE MENTION Katharine Hepburn

as Alice Adams in

"ALICE ADAMS"

Produced by RKO-Radio Pictures

Miriam Hopkins

as Mary Rutledge in "BARBARY COAST"

Produced by Samuel Goldwyn, Inc. Released by United Artists Corp.

Best Screen Play

"ALICE ADAMS"

Screen Play by

Dorothy Yost, Mortimer Offner and

Jane Murfin

From the novel by Booth Tarkington

Produced by RKO-Radio

HONORABLE MENTION

"DIAMOND JIM"

Adaptation by **Doris Malloy** and **Harry Clork**Screen Play and Dialogue by **Preston Sturges**From the novel by Parker Morrell
Produced by Universal Pictures **Corp.**

"SHE MARRIED HER BOSS"

Screen Play by **Sidney Buchman**From the original story by
Thyra Samter Winslow
Produced by Columbia Pictures Corp.

Los Angeles Releases September 23 to October 19

After the Dance—Columbia
Alice Adams—R.K.O.
Anna Karenina—M.G.M.
Barbary Coast—Sam Goldwyn
Bonnie Scotland—Roach-M.G.M.
Cappy Ricks Returns—Republic
Cheers of the Crowd—Monogram
Diamond Jim—Universal
Dressed to Thrill—Fox
Emperor's Waltzes, The—U.F.A.
Fighting Youth—Universal
Girl Friend, The—Columbia
Here Comes the Band—M.G.M.
Here's to Romance—Fox
I Live For Love—Warner Bros.
Last Outpost, The—Paramount
Little America—Paramount
Little Big Shot, The—Warner Bros.
Old Lady, The—Caesar Films
Peasant, The—Amkino Films
Pursuit—M.G.M.
She Married Her Boss—Columbia
Shipmates Forever—Warner Bros.
Special Agent—Warner Bros.
Special Agent—Warner Bros.
Special Agent—Warner Bros.
Storm Over the Andes—Universal
Super Speed—Columbia
Together We Live—Columbia
Two for Tonight—Paramount
Way Down East—Fox
Wings Over Ethiopia—Paramount
Woman Wanted—M.G.M.

Are Extras People?

THAT the Motion Picture Industry is unique among manufacturing industries is well known. That it has in it a rotteness, a complete disregard of the human factor that makes it possible, is less apparent. Even when this condition is pointed out, one is apt to say, more often than not, "That is a rare case. You run into the same thing in any manufacturing business."

But where, in these "civilized" United States in this Twentieth Century, can you find a parallel to the incident which follows?

Forty women received the call to report at 5:30 P. M., October 30, to the set for "Riff Raff," which J. Walter Ruben was directing for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. The call from Central Casting Corp. had specified "light rain." The costumes were furnished by the studio with only two costumes for each extra. The set worked twelve hours until 5:30 A. M., and each woman received a check-and-a-half—\$11.25. Lunch was not called until twelve midnight —six-and-one-half hours after the extras reported to the set

A few minutes after 10:00 P. M., the women were ordered into the rain for the first time. The set was equipped with overhead sprinklers, three fire hoses, and three wind machines. The latter created such a terrific gale that a number of women were forcibly knocked down and bruised in each take. One woman was knocked unconscious while another who took the full force of the stream of water from the hose on her back, was paralyzed from her hips down for several hours. Four women were temporarily blinded when the water hit them full force in the eyes.

WITHIN the first thirty minutes both costumes which the studio supplied were soaking wet. The dressing room tent was equipped only with small heaters. Only two wardrobe women were provided to take care of approximately forty women. No equipment was provided for drying clothes, and as the women took their clothes off, the wet garments were thrown in a pile, only to be issued again to some other person. Some of the women changed into wet dresses as many as nine times.

Between scenes the studio issued

one blanket to each extra. By 10:30 P. M. this blanket was soaking wet and the studio failed to provide additional dry blankets for the balance of the night. Face towels to use for drying wet faces and hair were missing until 3:30 A. M., at which time but a small supply was furnished. A number of women did not receive a single towel all night.

Without exception, each extra testified that this was the most terrible and horrible night of her entire experience in motion pictures. Several of the women upon whom this abuse was forced, were elderly while others were young girls in frail health. All gritted their teeth and stuck it out, though more than half needed medical attention immediately after they were dismissed. Several still are confined to their beds, while several others have welts and bruises on their bodies that will take weeks to heal.

And for all this, they each received the sum of \$11.25!

GAIN we repeat, while this is one of the worst of its kind, similar cases are frequent in this unique industry in which men and women are not considered as highly as the raw material that goes into any other manufactured goods. There is no law to prevent such abuse as the foregoing. There is in California, however, a law governing the employment of women in the Motion

Picture Industry. It is known as "Industrial Welfare Commission Order No. 16-A."

A portion of this law reads as follows: "1. Hours of Labor—No employer shall employ or suffer or permit any woman extra receiving a wage of \$15.00 or under per day or a wage of \$65.00 or under per week to be employed more than eight hours in any one day of twenty-four hours, except that in case of emergency (The italics are ours) women may be employed in excess of eight hours, provided that in no time of said emergency shall the number of hours, including meal periods, in any one day of twenty-four hours exceed sixteen hours from the time women extras are required to and do report until dismissed."

There is a sound reason for this provision. Working before a camera under hot lights is a nerve strain as well as a health-wrecking procedure. To allow the woman extra to renew her vitality and to replace her fatigued, brokendown nerve tissues, the writers of the law felt eight hours off the set in the few cases where an emergency should arise, was essential. Under ordinary conditions, sixteen hours away should be needed.

To the average person, who fails to consider the "uniqueness" of the Industry, the above seems fair. Yet in this one small section of the law are two jokers which the studios have found and with which they have played.

(Continued on Page 25)

Table I Women Extras Overtime on Major Studio Sets From January 1, 1935 to October 15, 1935

Studio	No. Cases	1/4 Checks	½ Checks		Full Checks	No. Directors
COLUMBIA PICTURES CORP.	12	8	4			6
FOX FILM CORP. STUDIO (1)	40	21	14	4	(2)	13
METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER STUDIO	49	41	3	5		18
PARAMOUNT STUDIO	28	17	10	1		10
RKO-RADIO PICTURES STUDIO	49	29	10	3	(3) (4)	20
UNITED ARTISTS STUDIO (5)	11	7	1	2	1	4
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS	16	13		2		6
WARNER BROSFIRST NATIONAL STUDIO	50	33	12	3	2	15

- (1) Includes one Twentieth Century-Fox.
- (2) For 17 hours, extras received one $\frac{3}{4}$ check. Another $\frac{1}{4}$ check was received by each woman, as an adjustment.
- (3) Eighty-five women forced to remain on the set for 17 hours.
- (4) Under director Stevens for six days from Sept. 9 to Sept. 14, extras received from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ checks every day.
- (5) Includes Samuel Goldwyn, Inc., Edward Small Productions, and Twentieth Century Pictures

The Above Figures Are Based on Less Than 12 Women Members of The Junior Guild

History of Producer-Talent Relations in the Academy

In the very excellent opening article of the October issue, discussing the "Academy Writer-Producer Agreement," reference is made to the early history of the Screen Writers' Guild and the Academy. For the sake of accuracy and possibly to illustrate the congenital producer mentality, may I be permitted to restate some of the facts, having been tollerably familiar with them.

The Screen Writers' Guild was originally organized for the same general purpose for which it exists today; namely, the betterment of writer and author conditions in motion pictures and to establish effective relations with producers. Besides doing much to elevate the standing of the screen writing profession, the original Guild persevered for several years in vigorous attempts to procure producer acceptance of uniform contracts. If it failed in this early missionary work it was not for want of trying and the failure was no greater than that of the powerful Equity, which was seeking the same thing for the actors.

When conditions finally became such that militant action seemed desirable and possible, the Guild, as then constituted, lent itself freely to a reorganization process, resulting in new blood and the fine, new Guild of today.

I am making this statement in justice to the pioneers, who struggled for writers' rights in the older, less hopeful days, and who did in fact raise something more than a "whisper," as you put it, against oppressive conditions. After all, the old Guild at least won the thorough hatred of the producers. The Guild has won little more to date. But it is to the credit of the Guild, old and new, that fear of its possible power has more than once helped to wring from the producers partial concessions, even though they be through the questionable agency of the Academy.

THE Academy came into existence at a time when it seemed like a heaven born instrument for the welfare of the entire industry. Each of the talent classes had grievances with no medium for their adjustment. But more than this and of greater importance as some of us viewed it, the screen and all its people were under a great and alarming cloud of public censure and contempt. Vicious assaults on personal reputations, as well as on the screen itself,

were humiliating to decent picture people and were resulting in a dangerous wave of censorship. Some constructive action seemed imperative to halt the attacks and establish the industry in the public mind as a respectable, legitimate institutution, and its people as reputable individuals. This point should be borne in mind in estimating the conditions that brought about the birth of the Academy. It was in fact the one great incentive on which all could unite.

The idea of one big, central organization that could present a solid front was first suggested in a casual conversation early in January, 1927, between Fred Niblo, Conrad Nagel, Fred Beetson and Louis B. Mayer. A dinner was arranged to which thirty picture people of more or less prominence representing all classes were invited. The movement was taken up with enthusiasm and an organization committee was at once appointed.

The constitution gave the employe classes a four to one vote over the employers. The stated purposes were (1) settlement of disputes within the industry by conciliation and arbitration, (2) protection from outside assault, (3) improvement in character and quality of production and (4) promotion of the good repute and standing of the screen and its people within the industry and with the public. The name, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, indicated the idealistic motives behind the movement. The overwhelming success of the organization dinner, when 325 members enrolled, including the flower of all the talent classes, proved the popularity of the ideals at the moment.

The project was therefore in no sense a concerted plot of the producers to put one over on the talent classes. In fact, producers were mostly hostile. What Mr. Mayer thought about it privately can only be conjectured. It is fair to assume, however, that he hoped it might head off class unionism, of which he had an intense horror. Nor among the talent classes was unionism a popular idea at the time. Many of them saw in the Academy set-up the possibility that the Producers' Branch, representing the employers, could exert an influence in the conduct of the organization out of all proportion to their voting strength, but they also hoped that friendly contact would accomplish more good in the long run than would militant conflict.

The Academy started out in May, 1927, with rosy dreams for an ideal-

By Frank Woods

... One of the organizers of the Academy and its active Secretary for the first four years tells some of the history of Producer-Talent relations in that organization. Mr. Woods also was one of the founders of the original Screen Writers' Guild and its President for two terms.

istic future. The first sad awakening came within two months, when the company officials in New York declared a ten percent cut in all production salaries. New York bankers had clamped down on them for gross extravagance and the companies had responded by laying the larger part of the blame on the "mounting costs of production," which they attributed to excessively high salaries in the talent classes. The same old stuff!

THE reverberations of rage that went up in Hollywood topped anything that has ever happened since. Creative workers declared they were receiving only an inconsiderable percentage of the vast revenues of the business they were creating and "mounting cost of production" was due to the wasteful methods of the producers themselves. Talent did not propose to be made the goat.

Each talent branch of the Academy held meetings of violent protest. Outside of the Academy the Screen Writers' Guild was especially vigorous in threats of resistance. Creative workers unattached to any organization were seething with rebellion. It seemed certain that a general strike of all talent would follow any attempt to put the cut into execution.

The producers were thoroughly frightened. It was then that they sought a means of retreat through the Academy, which the most of them had hitherto despised. They proposed that the Producers' Branch of the Academy should hold a series of conferences with the other branches, and if ways could be worked out for reducing costs of production sufficiently, the cut would be off.

The sneers and laughs that followed in Hollywood will be well remembered.

(Continued on Page 26)

An Axe to Cut Actors' Salaries??

In the past few weeks, a great government project has taken form, and in its ramifications threatens the existence of the very things the acting profession has fought for and won after years of struggle. We're referring to the Federal Theatre Projects under the W.P.A. (Works Progress Administration.)

We readily admit that the theatre has fallen to a low state, and it does not require a great deal of intelligence to realize that the screen and motion pictures have suffered from this condition. Pictures need the stage. In the past, plays have been the greatest source of screen story material. But last year, to quote an analysis recently made by the Motion Picture Herald, only 13 percent of motion picture story properties purchased were plays.

The stage, too, has been the primary source of supply of new acting talent. But now, with few plays running longer than three weeks in New York, this source for new talent is disappearing. In addition, the stage has been the place to test new trends in dramatic exposition

Consequently, we feel that the Federal Theatre Projects are important to our readers—so important that we have devoted the next four pages to discussions of the various phases of the plans. A rough picture of the general panorama is presented by Mrs. Hallie Flanagan, the director of all the projects, in her letter to Herbert Kline which is reprinted here with the permission of the New Theatre. Mr. Kline's answer, which also is a reprint from that publication, presents the views of a group in Equity known as The Forum.

The plans for the various projects in New York are contained in James H. S. Moynahan's interview with Elmer Rice, the regional director there. And Sam L. Kreider's interview with Gilmor Brown presents the picture of the projects to be attempted in the six western states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah.

With the exception of the letter from Mr. Kline, the above four articles manage to disregard the controversial aspect of the subjects. And there are many bases for controversy.

THE Federal Theatre Project was established to spend a large amount of money to put back to work needy professionals connected with the The-

atre, in all its branches. In practically every announcement from W. P. A., the statement "not relief but WORK" is pointed up. Nevertheless, most discussions of the subject steer clear of mention of the wage scale for actors: \$30.00 to \$94.00 (maximum) per month, or the wage scale for playwrights. (It is not clear that the latter are to be paid at all!)

Why should W. P. A. publicity omit mentioning the wages it will pay actors? And why is the status of playwrights under the plans not explained? Other than the possibility W. P. A. hopes to eliminate controversy by not mentioning these two facts, we cannot venture even a guess as to the explanation of this attitude.

Mention is made also, that the projects will attempt to find a permanent place in the general scheme of the Theatre. "It is hoped that organization, training and supplemental planning," a statement in the interview with Mr. Brown reads, "will make the individual units self-supporting and successful both artistically and economically." And Mr. Rice hopes that "These projects will be able to continue on their own momentum after the Federal program is completed."

Hidden in the latter statements, and the one concerning remuneration, we feel, may be an axe to slice actors' wages, unless—and this is important theatrical unions such as the Screen Actors' Guild are represented on the Projects' Board of directors, and on the other Boards throughout the country.

Under the plan, the country is divided into twelve regions each having the same boundaries as those of the Music, Art and Writing projects. Elmer Rice, famous dramatist, is director of the New York district. Thomas Wood Stevens, who was head of the Drama department at Carneige Tech before managing the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and more recently the "Globe Theatre" at the Chicago and San Diego Expositions, will direct the projects emanating out of Chicago. Frederic McConnell, head of the semiprofessional group which runs the Cleveland Playhouse, is in charge of the Cleveland region. And, as previously mentioned, Gilmor Brown heads the California projects.

Why is it that managers of professional theatre groups are conspicuous by their absence from the above list?

As far as we can find out, the great majority of the directors are not from professional ranks. Yet the projects are to be planned for giving "work" to professionals.

THERE is an apparent danger here. There is the possibility that these projects may call upon needy amateurs rather than needy professionals. The directors have been connected with amateurs and many of their plans are constructed along the lines of the Little Theatre. Isn't it reasonable to assume that this danger exists?

Of course, an amateur can become as hungry as a professional actor. But the Theatre as a profession owes no responsibility to the beginner. It is by his own initiative in climbing the bumpy, jagged road to success that the amateur becomes a trouper and assumes the real value and responsibility of a professional acting career.

The projects will attempt to bring back to the theatre the younger generation which, it is felt, is growing up without knowledge of the existence of flesh and blood entertainment. If they manage to do this and develop a new market for the profession, well and good.

Theoretically, the plans are admirable. Where they diverge from theory, and attempt long-scale, permanent planning, they fall down miserably. Here in California, upwards of 2,000 actors will be employed, and of this amount, ten percent need not be on relief. If, when the projects are completed on June 30, 1936, another category of alphabtical symbols materializes or the country returns to what is laughingly called "Prosperity", some 2,000 actors who were anxious and willing to work for \$23.50 (top scale) and were non-union actors, would be clamoring at the studio doors.

Or if the projects are successful in their attempt to become self-sustaining, these 2,000, adapted to living on such a low wage scale, will be thrown into direct competition with actors then employed in standard wage positions. One needs not be an economist to realize it would not be long before actors' wages in all branches would come tumbling down.

These projects must be supported since they enable a great number (Continued on Page 21)

A Letter from Mrs. Hallie Flanagan

Editor's Note: The following article, a letter from Mrs. Hallie Flanagan, Director of the Federal Theatre Project, to Herbert Kline, editor of the New Theatre, is reprinted here with the permission of the New Theatre magazine where it appeared in the November issue. The letter and Mr. Kline's reply presents an incomplete picture of the Federal Theatre Project which operates under the Works Progress Adminstration. The definite plans for the projects in New York and California are explained in interviews with the two regional directors, which appear on pages eight and nine.

Mr. Herbert Kline, Editor, New Theatre, 156 West 44th St. New York, N. Y.

Dear Herbert Kline:

You have asked me to tell you something of the new Federal Theatre Project. Your magazine is a friend of the theatre and of the unemployed, and your question therefore deserves the most intelligent answer I can give it. I shall state the problem and the general plan under which we hope to operate. If you or the readers of the New Theatre have suggestions to offer, I shall be glad to receive them.

The Federal Government allocated, as you know, \$4,800,000,000 for relief under the Works Progress Administrator, Harry L. Hopkins. This appropriation included \$27,000,000 for putting back to work musicians, writers, painters, sculptors, and theatre people. For each one of these fields there is a Federal Director; Mr. Nicolai Sokoloff for music; Mr. Holger Cahill for art; Mr. Henry Alsberg for writing; myself for the theatre. Each Federal director plans to work through regional directors for some twelve areas throughout the United States, and because we are eager to work together in close cooperation, we are using, as far as possible, the same regional divisions. Responsible to the regional director, and through him to the Federal director in Washington, there will be administrative directors of individual theatre projects.

Since this plan is for professionals, most of the projects will operate in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles where unemployment is most acute. Such groups as Actor's Equity, the League of New York Theatres, the Dramatists' Guild, the National Theatre Conference, are sponsoring various units; playtheatres for testing new wrights' scripts; Negro theatres in Harlem; a repertory of plays important in American theatrical history; a bureau of research and publication for dramatic material. Other projects are under way for vaudeville and specialty acts in connection with great recreation centers where dance orchestras of unemployed musicians will play for unemployed youth. The plan includes also the remodelling of the historic theatre in Charleston, South Carolina, where the oldest theatre in the United States will house a program reviving the play; done in the first theatrical season in America.

The CCC camp project is itself so vast in nature that one wishes for six years instead of six months to do it justice.. Although some travelling companies will still provide entertainment for camps, the Federal project stresses a resident theatre director for each camp, such a director to plan amateur nights in which the camp members themselves write and perform plays. At present, 35 of the 200 camps in New York, New Jersey and Delaware have such directors, and the requests have come to extend this activity to 2000 CCC camps throughout the United States.

It will be seen that while our immediate aim in all these propects is to put to work thousands of theatre people, our more far reaching purpose is to organize and support theatrical enterprises so excellent in nature, so low in cost, and so vital to the communities involved that they will be able to continue after Federal support is withdrawn.

With this in mind we are encourageing, except for camp or educational projects, a low admission charge of 25c to \$1.00, depending on geography of the unit involved. At the present time both theatre and cinema interests claim that free shows are hurting their trade;

it is possible that they may also object to an admission charge on the ground of undercutting; but it seems the lesser of the two evils. We have consulted the representatives from the League of New York Theatres, Actors' Equity, the American Federation of Actors, the Scenic Artists' Union, the Stage Hands' Union; as rapidly as possible we wish to consult all theatrical unions involved. Obviously they would all prefer, as would the director of this project, a higher rate of pay than the security wage of \$30 to \$94 per month depending on skill and the geographic placement. However, we are confronted, not by theory, but by the condition that the same wage prevailing throughout the Works Progress Administration affects, necessarily, the art projects. Certainly the labor organizations can be assured that eighty per cent of the entire allotment will be spent for labor costs; ten per cent for small administrative salaries; and ten per cent for production costs.

During the next few weeks of planning, and later, as the various projects start, we need the active interest and help of every person who cares about the theatre and about the problem of unemployment; we need the support of people who believe, as we do, that there is skill, experience, enthusiasm and intelligence in the theatre people now on relief rolls and in the thousands of theatre people who will cooperate with them. We need the support of people who share our belief that the theatre horizon is not contracting, but widening to include Santa Fe Desert, the Rocky Mountains, and the valley of the Mississippi; widening to include the arts of sculpture, music, architecture, the cinema; widening to include a consciousness of the social scene as well as the social register; widening in short, to include the impossible—that same impossible which has led our contemporaries to soar to the stars, whisper through space, and fling miles of steel and glass into the air.

We need the belief of all of you who care about the theatre in terms of the art and economics of 1935.

Sincerely,
Hallie Flanagan,
Director,
Federal Theatre Project.

The Editor of New Theatre Replies ----

Editor's Note: The following is a reply by Herbert Kline, Editor of the New Theatre, to the Hallie Flanagan letter which appears on the opposite page. While these two articles are reprinted here with the permission of The New Theatre magazine, they do not necessarily represent the views of the Screen Actors' Guild, The Screen Writers' Guild or The Screen Guilds' Magazine. They are published here merely because they are timely and informative.

Dear Mrs. Flanagan:

First, let me thank you for your prompt and friendly answer. The plans you outline for the Federal Theatre Project are of vital concern to New THEATRE. We see in the theatre project a welcome although shamefully belated effort to alleviate the distressing conditions prevailing among unemployed theatre workers. We see, also, an opportunity for the advancement of the drama throughout America as a medium for entertainment and education which will be within the reach even of the lowest paid sectors of our population. We have no fear, since the appointments of such progressive talents as Frederic McConnell, Gilmor Brown. Elmer Rice, John McKee, and Professors Koch and Mabie, among others, that the project will be used as was the New York PWA under Colonel Boothe to further pro-war propaganda.

Although you and your associates have our belief, interests and support in terms of art, ability and sincerity, in terms of the economics of 1935, there are several problems that we would like to bring to your attention.

First, there is the problem that you alone cannot settle—what kind of relief and how much? We believe that the sliding relief scales of the WPA are shamefully inadequate, that the American people who have created this country's wealth deserve better than a virtual starvation wage when they are

forced to go on relief through no fault of their own. We ask with Alfred Kreymborg, "What has become of all your gold, America?" We believe in and support the efforts of all relief workers to gain more adequate relief. Furthermore, we support the stand of the unions that prevailing wages should be paid to all relief workers. For we fear that the relief projects will prove a menace to wage standards that the unions throughout American industry have established after long years of struggle.

That the progressive elements in the stage unions are conscious of this was evidenced by the large turnout for an emergency meeting called by the Actors Forum group of Equity on October 17 to discuss the drama project and to call for a special meeting of Equity on the subject.

At the emergency meeting, which was addressed by three council members, George Heller, Philip Loeb and Alfred Van Dekker, three poinits were stressed:

- 1. The supervision of any project by the New York theatre operators was objected to on the grounds that the drama project is intended for indigent actors in need of relief, and that the project gave the operators an opportunity for practically free tryouts at relief wages thereby excluding the professional actor from one of his main sources of income.
- 2. The fear was expressed that WPA entertainment at 25c to 50c a ticket in Manhattan and in the theatrical districts of Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, etc., where the commercial theatres still charge an average of \$1.10 to \$3.30 a seat, would have a tendency to depress wages to the Equity minimums in order to meet WPA competition, and, ultimately, might break down prevailing standards for all theatre workers.
 - 3. Finally, as was stated by Philip

Loeb, the very existence of Equity and other stage unions is threatened by the creation of a government organized, non-union army of professional and amateur stage workers on relief, who might very easily be taken over, after the project is discontinued, by private managers at wages below prevailing union standards.

The meeting decided to send a resolution to Washington favoring:

- 1. Equity representation on theatrical projects.
- 2. No supervision of theatre projects by private producers or by League of New York Theatres.
- 3. Prevailing union wage rate on projects (\$5 a performance).
- 4. Special classification to be made in Equity for all people in theatre project.
- 5. Joint action with other affiliated theatre unions on all problems relating to theatrical relief projects.
- 6. Organization of committee to study new projects sponsored by Actors Equity Association.
- 7. Equity members to get priority on theatrical projects.

The stage workers have had to fight hard for their prevailing standards. Everyone familiar with the abominable conditions that prevailed throughout the entire industry before the workers got together in their great victorious strike of 1919 realizes that the stage unions must be guarded against factors that tend to weaken them. The resolution cited above presents, we believe, some valid objections to the present WPA set-up. We, who represent labor in the theatre in our creative work, are as eager as you are to see the drama project get under way at once. But the trade-union questions brought up by these Equity actors must be faced now before the project actually gets under way. As soon as these questions are settled, the stage unions and all other labor forces in the theatre will be able to cooperate to the fullest extent in carrying out the splendid plans you have outlined for the drama project.

Sincerely yours,

Herbert Kline, Editor, New Theatre

Federal Theatre Project Under Way in New York

MR. Elmer Rice, Regional Director of the WPA Federal Theatre Project for New York, has approved five drama projects calling for the employment of between 1,000 and 1,500 workers in every phase of theatrical work.

Actors, scenic artists, technicians, stage hands, ushers, cleaners, ticket takers, stenographers, typists, company and house managers and workers in every category of theatrical employment will find placement in the tasks for which their experience fits them.

The five approved projects are:

- 1. "The Living Newspaper"—dramatized news stories.
- 2. "The Negro Theatre"—dramatic and musical.
- 3. "The Popular Price Theatre"— experimental theatre.
- 4. "The Popular Price Theatre"—a similar, but distinct unit.
- 5. "Research and Publicity Project"—statistics and publicity.

These projects have been carefully calculated to give employment to the maximum numbers of workers while providing at the same time efficient production of the best class of theatrical entertainment at prices within the reach of those who of late have been obliged to forego theatrical attendance on the score of expense. It is Mr. Rice's belief that prohibitive prices have kept the legitimate theatre out of the reach of the younger generation to a considerable extent. By providing these young people with plays which they may see for a low price, Mr. Rice hopes to recapture the interest of the younger generation in the legitimate stage.

Mrs. Hallie Flanagan, National Director of the Theatre Projects, who was appointed early in September, has divided the country into twelve regions, each with a regional director responsible for establishing and supervising local dramatic projects sponsored by non-profit-making organizations.

MR. Rice, as Director of the New York Project, has amplified the specifications for the five projects under his jurisdiction as follows:

"The Living Newspaper" is to be a theatre sponsored by the N. Y. Chapter of the Newspaper Guild, designated to present a one-hour show of dramatized news stories. Newspaper men will collect and dramatize material: actors, stage hands, technicians and other theatrical workers will assist in its pre-

sentation. Richard Watts, Jr., motion picture critic of the N. Y. Herald-Tribune and a well-known writer on theatrical subjects will head this project, which is expected to utilize the service of some three hundred and fifty men and women.

"The Negro Theatre," the second unit, will employ approximately two hundred and fifty people. It will be sponsored by the N. Y. Urban League, a Negro cultural organization, and Mr. John Houseman, playwright and director of the Phoenix Theatre, will be in charge. This unit will function in a Harlem theatre, presenting a varied program of dramatic and musical productions with Negro actors, musicians and other theatrical workers.

The third and fourth projects will comprise the two experimental theatre groups under the heading of "The Popular Price Theatre." These will be two distinct projects, the first functioning under Edward Goodman, formerly of the Washington Square Players, and sponsored by a non-profit-making group of actors, directors and scenic artists whose object is to present plays of an experimental nature which would not be likely to receive commercial production.

Virgil Geddes, American playwright, and James Light, director, will head the second project-group, to be sponsored by the New School for Social Research and the United Neighborhood Houses. This group, likewise, will endeavor to develop young or unknown American writers who might not easily get a hearing elsewhere, and to develop new techniques of production. Each of these projects will have provision for about two hundred and fifty persons.

MISS Phyllis Perlman, a former feature editor of the Associated Press and a writer and press agent of wide theatrical experience, is to head the Publicity and Public Relations Department. This department, already functioning unofficially, will work in conjunction with a Research and Publication Department under the direction of Miss Rosamond Gilder, Editorial Secretary for the National Theatre Conference and author of "Enter the Actress", "A Theatre Library", etc.

These departments will provide not

These departments will provide not only the usual theatrical publicity, but will also collect and compile information and attendance statistics about the

An Interview With Elmer Rice By James H. S. Moynahan

... Writer-Member of the Dramatists' Guild who pinch-hit by interviewing Elmer Rice, in charge of the New York Theatre Projects, when the latter found himself too busy to write the article.

various acting companies under the Federal Theatre Project. A speakers' bureau, organized under their direction, will cooperate with schools, churches and clubs. These departments will create, further, a theatrical library which shall be a service model for other regional projects, will build up a comprehensive play catalogue on historical lines, and will publish bulletins on subjects of interest to playwrights and theatre directors.

Two hundred publicity writers, clerical workers, and statisticians, approximately, who have formerly been engaged in the professional theatre, are expected to find employment in Miss Perlman's department. Miss Gilder will employ some one hundred and fifty playwrights, adapters, playreaders and theatre research workers.

Already plans are progressing for the production of plays by these newly established theatres, and it is hoped that the first offering of a Federal Theatre Project Play will be made around Thanksgiving.

HILE these five projects are already lined up, other projects—among them a dance unit, a Yiddish Theatre, and a second Negro Theatre—are being developed, and will be put into operation as soon as the details of their organization and sponsorship are worked out and they are approved by the Regional Director. Mr. Rice's policy for all these projects is to charge a small admission fee, with the greatest number of seats selling for twenty-five and fifty cents.

At the present time the WPA maintains a circus unit, marionette and other entertainment units and about twenty-five dramatic and vaudeville units which tour the five boroughs and the CCC camps in the 2nd Corps Area. These will continue to function until a survey has been made and necessary changes and improvements can be put into effect. Many of the persons en-

gaged in the existing projects will be absorbed into the new drama projects now being organized.

The work of extending the new Drama Projects will necessitate increasing, at the same time, the workshop facilities. Additional carpenters, painters, seamstresses and other persons connected with theatrical properties departments will thus receive employment.

Now as to qualifications for these projects. At the present time applications for employment are being filled in practical entirety from the Home Relief rolls. Unemployed workers with a Home Relief number thus enjoy a definite precedence over all others where immediate employment is concerned. The purpose of the Project is, largely, to provide employment for theatrical workers now on Home Relief, and the number employed outside of this category in possible supervisory or

consulting positions will be small. In this connection it is relevant to state that not more than ten percent of the money allotted may be spent for administrative expenses. Ninety percent goes for salaries to Home Relief qualified applicants, whose names, upon employment with the projects, will be stricken from the Home Relief Rolls.

Wages on the projects will range from \$93.40 for clerical workers, \$103.40 for specialized technicians, to, in rare instances, \$135.00 for those in supervisory positions.

THE projects will run until June 30, 1936. Work on some of them has already started; it is hoped soon to have all in full swing. Applicants are urged to register without delay, and to make certain that their qualifications on the

score of Home Relief enrollment are in order. An endeavor is being made to see to it that less than one in ten—possibly one in twenty—will be selected from non-relief sources.

The following memorandum from Mr. Rice reflects the general policy of his organization:

"The Federal Theatre Project has been created for the purpose of providing worthwhile employment for professional theatre workers. Please bear in mind that you are not being offered relief or charity but WORK. The interviewers have been instructed to receive you with the same courtesy and consideration that would be extended by any professional employment agency, our object being to set up so high a standard of professional excellence in these projects that they will be able to continue on their own momentum after the Federal program is completed."

Federal Theatre Projects in the West

GILMOR Brown, director of the W. P. A. Theatre Project in the six western states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah, will follow to the letter in his district the plans of Mrs. Hallie Flanagan, National Director of the Theatre Projects. By doing this, it is hoped to rejuvenate and build the American Theatre to the highest standards in history.

Much thought will be given to the establishment of a real National Theatre under this W. P. A. movement. Since this country is widespread unlike the nations of Europe, where the National Theatre is in one city, a National theatre here will need to be constructed all over the country. This will be brought about by the Theatre projects.

The Western Regional district is one of twelve in the United States, and probably second in importance only to New York. It will have two head-quarters—one in Los Angeles, the other in San Francisco. These cities have been chosen because of the concentration in them of professional stage folk. From each of these centers, the work will radiate throughout the several states.

And it will be work, and in no sense relief. Mr. Brown accentuates this point. The number of people to be directly considered is approximately 2000, with the projects planned to run until June 30, 1936. At the end of this period, it is hoped that organization, training and supplemental planning will make the individual units self-support-

ing and successful both artistically and economically.

R. Brown also stresses the fact that the plans approved and under discussion are intended to encompass all Professional workers who are eligible. Those now on relief will have precedence in the matter of employment. Consultants, supervisors and executives may be employed from others than those on relief, but in any event, not more than ten percent of the monies allotted can be used for administration expenses, while all the balance shall be paid to the actual workers.

Wages on the projects will range from \$93.40 for clerical workers, \$103.40 for specialized technicians and \$135.00 for supervisors. These figures are by the month.

The type of employment will cover the entire theatrical range, with work being given to the following classes of workers: actors, advance agents, janitors, watchmen, house managers, unit managers, box office managers, ticket takers, playwrights, scenarists or manuscript clerks, ushers, stage hands, stenographers, typists, scenic artists, construction men, technicians, newspaper men, publicity directors, librarians, playreaders, adapters, painters, carpenters, seamstresses and clerks.

FOUR projects already have been approved for the Western division and are now getting under way. Soon, they will employ into the hundreds.

Interview with Gilmor Brown By Sam L. Kreider

... Publicity director of the Pasadena Community Playhouse, of which Gilmor Brown is supervising director. Mr. Brown also is in charge of the W. P. A. Theatre Project for this region.

- 1. Educational Theatre With the cooperation of one of our great Universities, a professional company will be organized. It will be sponsored by the University and will function in full cooperation with all University activities and curriculum.
- 2. Experimental Theatre—This will develop new plays, new play-wrights, new forms of the drama and new ideas generally. Under this plan it is hoped that new forms of dramatic entertainment will be found that will prove as much an advance as the entertainment of today is ahead of that of twenty years ago in some respects.
- 3. Popular American Theatre—This is what the name implies and will provide for the proven plays that the American Public has supported in the past. Many hundreds of persons will be employed in this unit.
- 4. School Plays—With the cooperation of educational groups, Boards of Education, etc., it is intended to provide professional companies (Continued on Page 17)

"I Didn't Say It Was Any Good, Said the White King, I Said There Was Nothing Like It"

EVERY so often some mahatma is brought in from the outlands to apply the tender unction of Art to Hollywood; a gentle poultice laid against the chapped and roughened motion picture soul. There can be little cavil against the intentions of those who issue the invitations for these ventures. Doubtless they are as sincere as a regard for the box office on the one hand and a heightened prestige on the other can make them. But having made a genuflection to good intentions, one may be permitted a swift and well-planted boot at the rump of the bizarre standards by which art is measured among these haciendadoes by the Pacific.

Our rustic frenzy in Hollywood at the mere mention of a more than fourth rate literary or dramatic name calls for no deep psychiatric explanation. We have been bedeviled for so long by reformers and voodoo chanters, that there can be small wonder our local definition of art is a movie that keeps its nose clean and is based on some work written before Fulton invented the steamboat.

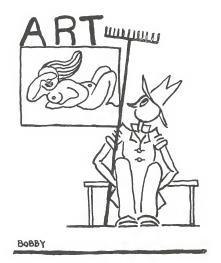
Easy as it is to explain our arrival at this blind alley, it still remains true that looking goggle-eyed with eestacy at Dickens or Shakespeare and snooting with disdain at Ring Lardner is the height of something or other. This contempt of creative expression in the here and now is the other side of our gawky veneration of a past that we little understand. And as such it is not unrelated to our professional contempt of those audiences with round haircuts in the here and now who pay for our salaries, our dividends and our receiverships.

We can always save a shred of our dignity in a business that leaves us little to spare by continuing to pretend that audiences are composed of Neanderthals with a sprinkling here and there from the Ice Age. The obvious corollary to this collossal conception is that whenever we plume ourselves on handing out a little Art to the benighted, we put before them a feast of dead horsemeat, steaming with rich and ornate gravies of various colors.

It will probably take an upheaval of the first rank to convince the purveyors of Hollywood that picture audiences in America, the primary market, know more about screen story telling than do those who make the stories, and are much quicker to separate the bogus from the true. Why we have to go on letting ourselves be bulldozed into making a heavy-handed something called "Art" in Hollywood is hard to comprehend. Audiences and critics alike have already abundantly decided that one Mickey Mouse contains more beauty, wit, criticism of reality and commentary on life—suited to the medium of today's screen—than a dozen attempts to photograph a stage play intended for varlets of Sixteenth Century London.

There is no reason why the screen shouldn't do the literary works of yesterday, in the same sense that a publisher puts out a reprint of "Robinson Crusoe." But there is no reason for us to tear our hair about it. As it is now, the introduction of talk in the screen seems to have filled picture people with the quaint conviction that literature was written for nineteen hundred years for the sole purpose of being turned into motion pictures. A kind of intellectual snobbery has come in with talk that has falsified the entire cinematic horizon.

Just as now critics of the novel find in the works of Fielding and Rabelais an unstudied intimacy with their time and a validity as works of art for their period which is shared by few novels among the stereotyped and imitative works of a later period, so will aesthetic historians of another century label Chaplin, D. W. Griffith and Sennett as true artists of the motion picture. Pictures such as "Lady for a Day" and "Public Enemy" will also in some future text book receive a high rating, while a brief footnote will dismiss the photographed classics as mere chromoes, having little or nothing to do with the function of the talking picture.



By Ralph Block

... Former President of the Guild and now a contributing editor discusses the failure of the "mahatmas" in their efforts to bring Art to Hollywood.

classics of tomorrow will be selected from the vast output of this great medium of today.

In a field where buncombe is so often mistaken for importance and the truly important so easily dismissed, it may be sheer folly to discuss so dry a subject as the screen's function. Yet in a top-heavy, complicated civilization such as ours, tottering ominously at the edge of catastrophe, the screen has an undoubted function. Among mediums of communication, the screen is preeminently suited to the transfer of intelligence and ideas between the separate parts of a high speed society. In the middle ages, a similar function was performed by the painters; with the development of populations the job was assumed by the novel and the theatre, and in a secondary way by the newspaper.

HE motion picture can no longer evade the task of interpreting human beings to themselves. Men and women nowadays haven't the quiet and time to contemplate themselves or their navels; they read as they run, and the screen alone makes that acrobatic feat possible. If your financier rightly asks in this era of expected profits whether interpreting human beings to themselves creates dividends, you can always counter with another question. there be any money to make if human beings fail to understand themselves fairly soon — their own aims and desires, their own natures and the nature of the society they are fumblingly trying to recreate?

A great many solemn people will deplore the failure of "Art" in motion pictures as tending to discourage producers from making efforts to bring out superior wares. They may take comfort from the facts. The figures usually show that when "Art" fails in motion picture theatres, it is not because it is too good for modern audiences, but because it isn't good enough. Motion picture producers, discoverers of the

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Have You Forgotten Your Life Class?

MONCE saw written into a motion picture script, "the photography in the following sequence should be harsh and bad in imitation of news reel photography." Our hero was photographed for a newsreel, and the newsreel was shown in the picture.

All right, the photography in newsreels is seldom beautiful. Often it's harsh and unflattering. Newsreel cameramen work outdoors. They can't halt a parade, a fire, an assassination, or a beauty contest, while dimmers are tactfully arranged to glorify the star's cheekbones. Newsreel soundmen have no defense against coughs, crickets, or traffic.

When Mamma Rabinowitz wins the sweepstake grand prize, her newsreel speech is filled with hesitations and eyerolling. She is apt to pleat her bungalow apron or wipe her sweating palms on it.

In the bootlegged newsreel of the Hauptmann trial, the sound track was harrassed by a barrage of coughing. Whispers sounded like the pounding of the surf, and the shifting of people sitting on uncomfortable chairs was picked up like the noise a herd of elephants would make crashing through the jungle.

The newsreel, while sometimes pretty, is not art. A screen courtroom scene should never include the irrelevant noise and movement which swamps the drama and steals the scene from the man on trial for his life. Mrs. Rabinowitz, with her complete lack of technique, would not and should not be the casting director's choice to play the part of a sweepstakes winner. The newsreel is a record. We're not making records. All of us, actors, writers, directors, art directors, are selecting, interpreting, underscoring salient points and vignetting out distractions. That's the theory, anyway.

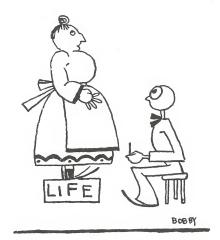
In writing dialog, we throw overboard the half-finished sentences, the meaningless chatter which forms so large a part of everyday speech. In acting a scene, screen players eliminate the pattings of the hair, the fiddling with wrist watch or compact, the prodding of a butt dying in an ash-tray with the end of a match dead already which take place in an actual tete-a-tete across a night club table An art director and a set dresser, readying Mrs. Goadby's drawing room for the screen, eliminate the copy of last week's

Post, left on the windowsill, the stack of mail on the desk, and the spectacles on the coffee table.

But if we're to select, simply, underscore and elide, we ought to know the full record, the literal, unretouched, unedited original. Great pianists and great singers run lots of scales. Cezanne learned the look, feel, weight, texture, and color of oranges, fruit knives and table cloths before he painted the still life which was a simplification, an arrangement, a planned and deliberate design.

THINK too many of us either skipped or skimped our years in life class. And that applies to the lot of us, actors, directors, writers, art directors. There's a great deal of information for an actor in the scared face of a man in a newsreel crowd just before the auto racer hurtles over the wall into his lap. Some of our character women who specialize in old ladies, might have watched Granny's progress around the room with benefit to their work. They have taken as their model not a life old lady but another stage old lady.

A fine example of a player who has never forgotten his life class studies is Spencer Tracy. James Cagney studied his hard boys on the East Side. His technique simplifies, interprets, creates from his acquaintance with reality. Listen to Frank McHugh speak the line, "Oh . . . should 'a been black, huh?" in "The Irish In Us;" watch J. M. Kerrigan in "The Informer;" remember back to "Border Town" and Bette Davis going crazy, if you think hard work in life class isn't an essential foundation for technique.



By Mary C. McCall, Jr.

... A contributing editor who feels that pictures lose a lot by not studying life.

When I worked as a copy-writer in an advertising agency, I found myself learning to write a new language—a language far removed from every day speech. It had rhythm all right, but not the rhythm of talk, the rhythm of "copy." Its primary purpose seemed to be not to inform, but to produce a mild hypnosis, during which sales resistance was lulled into coma. I think we screen writers are developing a language—a patois quite different from ordinary talk—something called "dialog." When we embark on a light comedy, our mind's ear is tuned to the last brisk comedy dialog we heard, not to amusing talk.

I'm convinced that the one piece of equipment with which a natural-born writer is endowed from his conceptioin is a good ear. That ear is a gift. It's no credit to him, but it's of enormous use. It must be innate, like absolute pitch. It can't be acquired, but it can be developed, exercised, used. Too many of us are letting our ears atrophy. We're using them to listen to other writer's dialog, when we ought to be riding in buses, sitting in restaurants, standing in lobbies and markets, eavesdropping in beauty parlors and steam rooms listening to talk.

Some of Booth Tarkington's finest talk is being spoken on the screen just now in "Alice Adams." It took years of good listening to make that writing possible. Ring Lardner had an infallible ear. Arthur Kober's "Thunder Over the Bronx" is written in talk, not in dialog.

GREAT deal of screen acting, screen writing, and many screen sets are as florid, lifeless and phoney as a meringue glace. We're not selecting and editing from reality, emphasizing its important features and discarding its irrelevancies to create drama. Too often actors are parading tricks learned from other actors while they speak "dialog" written by someone whose ear has grown deaf from disuse. And the

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What Good Is A Reading Department?

It seems to be a moot question in the Studios as to what good the Reading Department is, anyway? But since no studio has so far been able to get along without one, there must be some excuse for them.

Of course the perfect Reading Department has not yet been developed; the majority have many faults, quite obvious to those who may be looking for them. But it takes cooperation, respect, and appreciation to call forth the best in anything or anybody—in a department just the same as in an individual.

First and foremost among the qualities needed to develop a perfect Reading Department—or even to improve the one you have-I would place cooperation. Cooperation among the units of the department, and cooperation on the part of every other department or individual executive whose work touches that of the Reading Department. This cooperation should take the form of keeping the Department head actively informed as to the story needs and interests of the various executives. Each individual reader should be given some idea of these story needs, of the contract actors, and—insofar as possible, through previews, etc. — of the work of these various actors.

Cooperation would in itself imply appreciation for good work—appreciation expressed. In every studio there is usually one executive for whom the readers always do their best work, surpassing their usual standard. Investigation will reveal that this particular executive takes the trouble to express appreciation for a job well done; and this knowledge that good work is going to meet with recognition calls forth the best efforts of the worker.

MONEST censure for poor work should be as promptly forthcoming as praise for good—but it should be openly expressed to the person responsible for it. Resentment and lack of cooperation are bound to result when a reader discovers that his work has been condemned and disparaged to others, while not a word has been said to him to give him a chance to correct it. Too often, also, the fact is not taken into account in judging a piece of work, that a four-hour job has been crowded into two hours under pressure of a rush—and that the best work cannot be done under such a strain.

It is the usual lack of appreciation and respect for their work which causes the apathetic attitude of many readers. What's the difference, they feel, whether their work is good or bad—nobody seems to notice. What's the difference what they feel about a story—no one values their opinion. Supposedly, the readers hold their jobs because they have proved they have a fairly intelligent grasp of stories and of what makes a good picture; if they lack these qualifications they should not be readers. Therefore their considered and honest opinion of a story should have some weight.

NOTHER fact which seems so often to escape executives is that readers sometimes have ambitions—and perhaps ability to fulfill those ambitions if given a chance. It should certainly not be true (but it is a conviction often expressed) that a promising young writer kills his chances in the writing line by joining the reading staff. Or that a reader who becomes a writer seldom ever gets a chance in his own studio.

By Betty Roberts

... Who is in charge of the reading department at R. K. O., and very serious about it, too.

Surely executives should be as alert for signs of ability in the work of their own staff as they are in the work of outsiders.

A Reading Department can be a vital and helpful part of a studio's work. But so long as it is considered a sort of "necessary evil", it is not likely to come up to its best. If a Reading Department is necessary to handle the stories—if it is a useful and worthwhile unit—then let it be respected as such. If it has faults, let them be pointed out and eliminated through open criticism. Politics and behind-the-scenes scheming are not likely to improve either its morale or its usefulness.

The Reading Department in any studio will reach just the standard which is set for it—if its work is valued it will become valuable.

ATTENTION ACTORS' GUILD MEMBERS

Under the new fiscal plan of the Guild there are three dues classifications for Senior members, all with equal vote, as follows:

Class 1 — Over \$50,000 a year . . . \$ 100 yearly dues Class 2 — Over \$15,000, or less than \$50,000 \$ 60 yearly dues Class 3 — \$15,000 a year or less . . \$ 30 yearly dues

The majority of our members have classified themselves in answer to a letter of October 12th, which announced the change.

This notice is published to clear up any misunderstanding which may exist in the minds of Equity members. The payment of dues to the Guild after November 1st, 1935, includes your Equity dues, which will be paid by the Guild to Equity.

Please address any communications regarding classifications to this Committee in care of the Guild office. All classifications are strictly confidential.

Classification Committee:

PAUL HARVEY MURRAY KINNELL DONALD WOODS

The Dead Heads of the Lord

By Irvin S. Cobb

SOME of us — who don't know any better — think of actors as children who never grew up. And some of us call them vain and envious and tempermental. And sometimes, perhaps, these critics may be right. But, oh, their faults are such little faults and their virtues are such splendid ones. For through these past years of distress — and they've fallen mighty hard upon the players —they've worn on their breasts like badges of blazing honor, two of the noblest words I can think of—"gallantry" and "compassion".

It's proverbial that the people of dramatic trades always have been prodigal of their time and their talents in behalf of others. But here lately they've worked for the destitute of their own craft. And how they've worked.

I mean no affront to any man's beliefs, but if it's true, as a great Frenchman once said, that the dead take into the next world, clutched in their stiff cold hands only what they have given away in this one, then I have a vision before me of what might fitly come to pass on that Last Day when the curtain rolls up for the opening performance of the piece called Immortality . . . the hit that will run forever.

And up the long hill to where the walls of glory loom, I see the show folk coming, the troupers, they who once were rated with tinkers and vagrants and strolling vagabonds. And oh, what splendid gems, what jewelled treasures they clutch to their stilled bosoms . . . the glistening diamonds of the laughter their art has drawn from a million-times-a million throats; the red rubies of their hearts' blood that was given to make mankind happier for a magic hour; the lustrous matched pearls of the tears they have shed and

the sweat they have sweated for the woes of their own. And they stand there, hopefully, fearfully, wondering if on this great first night of all nights, they are to be included among the Dead Heads of the Lord.

ND as they stand there, I hear the voice of the Almighty Prompter, the Supreme Stage Manager, uplifted. And in it is the thunder that crackled once over Mt. Sinai. And in it is the lightning that played across the graven tablets of the Divine Commandments. And it rings against the span of the firmament that is the proscenium arch for this Eternal Playhouse. And it rattles the fixed stars that are the footlights of that Celestial Theatre beyond the skies. And it says:

"For some who on that earth below were greedy and cruel, the free-list everlastingly has been suspended. For some, who forgot to share with others, away down beneath the clinkered pits of Hell, yawns the mouth of that dark alleyway which leads to a Cain's Infernal Storehouse. But out yonder stand the actor folk . . . those they call the children. And that's what they are, but they're God's children.

"So you, St. Michael in the box office, sheathe that flaming sword. And you, St. Peter with the keys, turn the lock in those Golden Gates. And you, St. Gabriel in the orchestra pit, sound on your silver trumpet for the grand overture number.

"And now, angels, hang onto your haloes, and cherubim, pin back your wings. For this Heavenly Operyhouse is about to extend the courtesies of the profession . . . and let my people in".

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Faragoh Now U. A. Deputy

DURING the past month, Francis Faragoh has been appointed the deputy to represent the Board at United Artists in expediting and simplifying member contact with the organization.

A deputy has been installed at each studio to serve as a liaison officer who is easily accessible to Guild members at all times. Deputies are available to Guild members for the following: (a) To report individual complaints; (b) To service controversies to be handled by the Guild's Conciliation Commission; (c) To report violations of the Guild Code; (d) To handle protests against membership transfers, etc., etc.

All Guild members should contact their deputies at least once a week both to advise them of their current assignment, and to report or discuss activities which should be presented to the Board. Deputies, in turn, will make reports to the Guild once a week or more often if circumstances demand.

Research Service Available

As another service, the Guild has completed negotiations with the Capitol Screen-Research Service to put at the disposal of members the facilities of research experts who are particularly prepared to furnish information from sources not otherwise readily available. And to Guild members, these services will be available at a fifty percent discount from the regular charges.

Screen-Research has access to the vast resources of the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., and to the various departmental libraries such as those of the War and Navy Departments, the State Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Labor, the Surgeon-General's Office, the Bureau of Standards, etc. It not only has access to the libraries and records of these Departments, but it is in a position to furnish unpublished information from experts in these Departments. It has connections in England and France and can supply material from the British Museum and the Bibliotheque Nationale.

General information can be furnished on any subject, or specific questions concerning any subject, can be fully answered. Information is furnished in such form as to make it entirely unnecessary to examine the original sources of the information or to check for accuracy.

Call the Guild office, GL. 4181, for more complete information. This is a Guild service which is available to all members.

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Added To Membership Committee

SINCE the last issue of this publication, Lester Cole, John Twist, Eve Greene and Gordon Rigby have been added to the Membership Committee. A report of the Committee's activities for the past month appears elsewhere in these columns.

Use Line In Advertising

MORE and more advertisements are appearing in the trade press bearing the legend "Member of The Screen Writers' Guild," and as a result, more people are becoming aware of the fact that more than ninety per cent of screen writers are Guild members.

Again the Guild wishes to remind the members to include the line in all their advertising copy.

Notify Your Deputy

ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCREEN WRITERS' GUILD ARE ASKED TO ADVISE THEIR STUDIO DEPUTY IMMEDIATELY UPON BEING NOTIFIED BY THE STUDIO OF AN ASSIGNMENT.

Discount Available On Stenographic Service

DISCOUNTS that mean an appreciable saving in all stenographic work are available to Guild members through its stenographic service affiliation. These discounts can be obtained (Continued on Page 22)

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Exhibition Meets Expectations

WINNING the title of "The Biggest Grossing Attraction at the San Diego Exposition", the Motion Picture Hall of Fame lived up to all expectations. Financially, it was highly profitable to the Guild, and from the standpoinit of publicity contact with the general public, it proved the most valuable in which the Guild has participated.

It is too early to release the accurate figures on attendance. Even though the Hall of Fame played the same show during the entire run of the Fair, it sold more paid admissions than any other concession, even more than the next most popular exhibition, the Globe Players, which presented seven different shows, allowing for repeat business.

All in all, The Motion Picture Hall of Fame has been a valuable experience for the Screen Actors' Guild.

Richard Tucker An Agent

AT the last Board meeting of The Screen Actors' Guild, the following letter was read and accepted:

November 4, 1935.

Board of Directors, Screen Actors' Guild, Hollywood, Calif. Fellow Members:

It is with extreme regret that I tender this, my resignation as a member of the Board and ask that you also relieve me of dues—but not my obligation to the Guild.

I am about to become Agent No. 299!! (So help me). But if at any time in the future I can be of service to the Guild in my new role, you need but call upon me.

Thank you all for many kindnesses.

Faithfully,

Richard Tucker.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to send Mr. Tucker a letter of appreciation for his many services to the Guild and to wish him, in the name of the Guild, a successful and pleasant future in his new connection

Mr. Tucker, one of the organizers of the Guild and its assistant secretary for some time, has become affiliated with the Gene Mann agency.

In Memoriam

Sam Hardy Gordon Westcott David Landau

The Junior Guild

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Rulings Clarified

URING the past month, the Junior Guild has managed to clarify two rulings through Central Casting and the Industrial Welfare Commission.

1—INTERVIEWS—In the past, extras selected by the studios to work later, were not paid carfare at the conclusion of their interviews. Those who were interviewed and not selected were paid carfare. Because the Industrial Welfare Commission has interpreted the ruling at the request of the Junior Guild, hereafter, all extras called to the studios for interviews will be paid carfare.

2—PUTTING ON COSTUMES BE-FORE STARTING WORK—According to the new interpretation of this ruling, extras who have been fitted previously now don their costumes on studio time. This corrects the existing practice which required that extras working in costume start the time of their call after they report to the set.

For instance, certain studios in the past gave calls for "9 A. M. on the set". This was unfair to the costume people as they were forced to come to the stu-

(Continued on Page 23)

Screen Writers' Assignments ...

KEY

O.—Original Story.

A.—Adaptation.

C.—Continuity.

D.—Dialogue.

L.—Lyrics.

M.-Music.

*—In Collaboration.

Adamson, Ewart-Warner Bros. The Walking Dead" O*, A, C, D.

Avery, Stephen Morehouse—Walter Wanger Prod.—"Big Brown Eyes" A, C, D.

Bartlett, Sy-Universal "The Amateur Racquet" A, C, D.

Baum, Vicki—M. G. M.
"Grand Opera" O, A, C, D.

Belden, Charles-Warner Bros. 'God's Country and the Woman'' A*,C*,D*

Block, Ralph—Reliance-U. A. "Last of the Mohicans" A*, C*, D*.

Boylan, Malcolm Stuart—Universal Edgar Guest Story, C, D.

Brackett, Charles—Paramount
"Easy Living" A*, C*, D*.

Breslow, Lou—20th Century-Fox
"Paddy O'Day" O*, A*, C*, D*.

Buckley, Harold—Warner Bros.
"Public Enemy's Wife" A*, C*, D*.

Buffington, Adele—R. K. O. "Plan XVI" A*, C*, D*. "Volcano" O, A, C, D.

Chanslor, Roy—Warner Bros.
"Invitation to a Murder" A, C, D.

"Invitation to a Murder" A, C, D.

Darling, W. Scott—Republic

"The Return of Jimmy Valentine" O,A,C,D

Daves, Delmer—Warner Bros.

"Slim" A, C, D.

Dix, Marion—Gaumont-British

"Everything Is Thunder" A, C, D.

"Say When" O, C, D.

Dunne, Finley Peter, Jr.—Universal

"Magnificent Obsession" C*, D*.

Dunne, Philip—Reliance-U. A.

"Last of the Mohicans" A*, C*, D*.

Endore, Guy—Pickford-Lasky, U. A.

"Casanova, The Great Lover" O*.

Felton, Earl—Warner Bros.
"The Wizard of St. Germaine" O*, A*, C*,D*.
"Man Hunt" O.

Fields, Herbert—Paramount "Easy Living" C*, D*.

Finkel, Abem—Warner Bros.
"Public Enemy's Wife" A*, C*, D*.

Franken, Rose—Universal
"Dust" O*, C*, D*.
Pioneer Pictures—"American Rhapsody"
O*, C*, D*.

Gordon, Leon-M. G. M. 'The Last of the Pagans'' C*, D*.

Greene, Eve-Paramount

"Easy Living" A*, C*, D*.

Grey, John—R. K. O.

Ed Kennedy Comedy O*, A*, C*, D*.

Hayward, Lillie—Warner Bros.

"Blood of China" O.
"Gilt Edged Blondes" A, C, D.
Herzig, Sig—Warner Bros.
"Special Arrangement" A.
Hoffman, Joseph—Warner Bros.
"Wizard of St. Germaine" O*, A
"She Couldn't Say No" A, C, D.
Hoffenstein, Samuel—M. G. M.
"Bugle Ann" A, C, D.
Hume, Cyril—R. K. O.
"Green Grow the Lilacs" A

A*, C*, D*.

"Green Grow the Lilacs" A, C, D. Hutchison, Jerry—R. K. O. "Thorobreds All" C*, D*.

Johnson, Henry—Paramount
"The F Man" A*, C*, D*, M, L.

"The F Man" A*, C*, D*, M, L.

Krims, Milton—Warner Bros.
"Beethoven" O, A, C, D.

Levien, Sonya—20th Cent.- Fox
Dr. Dafoe Story, O, A, C, D.

Loos, Anita—M. G. M.
"The Sport of Queens" A, C, D.

MacDonald, Wallace—Republic
"The Glory Parade" O.

McCarthy, Mary—Republic
"Fairground" A.
"Laughing Irish Eyes" A.

McCoy, Horace—Walter Wanger Prod.
"Brazen" A*, C*, D*.

Marlow, Brian—Paramount
"Millions In the Air" A*.

"Marlow, Brian—Paramount
"Millions In the Air" A*.
"This is the Life" A*.
"Woman Trap" A*.

Martin, Al—Victory Prod.
"Wanted Men" A, C, D.

Meehan, Elizabeth—M. G. M.
"Gram" A*

Republic—"The Glory Parade" A*. Mintz, Sam—R. K. O. "Farmer in the Dell" A, C, D.

Morgan, Ainsworth—M. G. M.
"The Gorgeous Hussy" A, C, D.

Nichols, Dudley—R. K. O.
"Mary of Scotland" A, C, D.

North, Edmund—R. K. O. "Bunker Bean" A*, C*, D*.

Offner, Mortimer—R. K. O. "Sylvia Scarlett" A*, C*.

Palmer, Stuart—R. K. O.
"Puzzle of Briar Pipe" O, A*, C*, D*.

Paramore, E. E.—M. G. M.
"Three Godfathers" A*, C*, D*.

Parsons, Lindsley—Republic "The Oregon Trail" O, A*, C*, D*. "G-Men of the '90's" A*.

Presnell, Robert—R. K. O. "Blue Heaven" A, C, D.

Raphaelson, Samson—U. A. "Casanova" O.

Reed, Tom—Warner Bros.
"Blood of China" A, C, D.
"Case of the Velvet Claws" A, C, D.

Rivkin, Allen—20th Cent.-Fox "Thank You, Jeeves!" A, C, D.

Sayre, Joel—20th Cent.-Fox "Wooden Crosses" O, A, C, D.

Schary, Dore—Paramount "Happy Valley" C, D.

Schubert, Bernard—M. G. M.

"Kind Lady" A, C, D.

"The Old Nest" A, C, D.

Solow, Eugene—Walter Wanger Prod.

"Simoon" A*, C*, D*.

Starling, Lynn—Paramount
"Give Us This Night" C, D.
Stewart, Donald Ogden—M. G. M.
"Maytime" C*, D*.
Taylor, Dwight—M. G. M.

Taylor, Dwight—M. G. M.
Eleanor Powell Original O, A*, C, D.
Thompson, Harlan—Paramuont
"The Old Timer" A*, C*, D*.

Townley, Jack—R. K. O.
"The Wild West" A*, C*, D*.

Unterberger, Sally—Universal
Untitled Original O*.
Weten Pabet Control Films 1td

Untitled Original O*.

Watson, Robert—Central Films, Ltd.

"Tugboat Princess" A*, C*, D*.

Wead, Frank—Warner Bros.

Untitled O, A, C, D.

Whately, Roger—Regal Color Prod.

"The Rest Cure" A, C, D.

Pacific Pictures—"Yellow Cargo" O,A,C,D.

Wilson, Carey—MGM-Thalberg

New Marx Bros. Story, O*, A*, C*, D*.

"Tish" A*, C*, D*.

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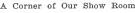
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Zeppo Marx. Uliman, Elwood-Untitled Humorous Article Judge

Watson, Robert — Articles, Sunday Post— Glasgow Bulletin

Federal Theatre Projects

(Continued from Page 9)

to present desirable plays to the end that all the youth of America will become interested in the spoken and personal theatre. Through this unit, it is planned to train a vast audience of youngsters who will become regular patrons of the Theatre.

THERE are a number of plans still under discussion and on which no definite action has yet been taken. These concern the Negro Theatre, the Marionette Theatre, the Living Newspaper, Vaudeville, Road Companies and Motion Picture Projects.

Serious consideration is being given for early action here on the "Living Newspaper". This is Elmer Rice's original idea and is now under way as a part of the New York project which Mr. Rice heads. Vaudeville will be provided in all its ramifications with travelling companies covering the Western States. These units will play before American Legion Hospitals, other Hospitals, CCC Camps, etc. Road Companies to travel to all places where they will be properly sponsored also are under consideration.

The entire program is non-profit. Many performances will be free to the public. Some performances will have small admission fees—not greater than one dollar, scaling down. In this manner it is hoped to bring many of the great dramas, which previously have been out of reach because of high admissions, to millions of young and old. This will materially aid in developing a legitimate, positive and permanent interest in the stage.

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Lowdown On London

Rorgoodnessakes! The way the fans mobbed Fredric March at the "Dark Angel" Premiere; who said we British were a cold nation!!! . . . And then March gave all the Selznick-Joyce London office staff the nicest bottles of perfume . . . Edgar Selwyn "took over" the movie page of the Express here to tell us he next was producing "Elegance" at Metro and that Joan Crawford would not wed Franchot Tone; ha! ha! . . . Every technician, not to mention every star and fea-

By John Paddy Carstairs

... The Screen Guilds' Magazine London correspondent reports the month's happenings.

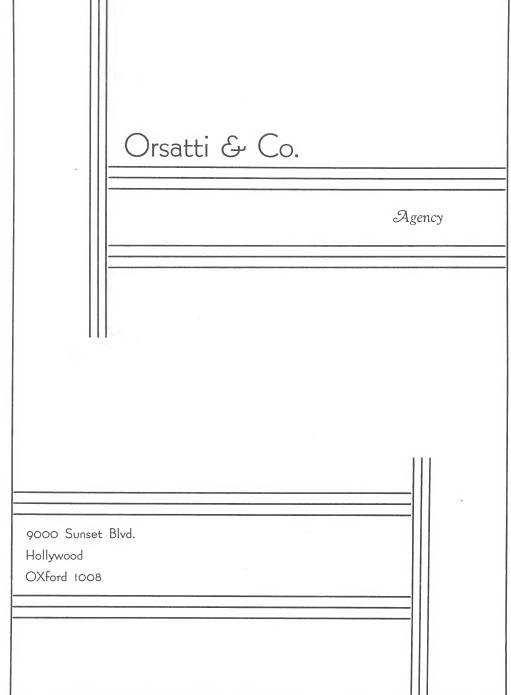
tured player in this country is trying to get with London Films!... can you blame 'em?

Wow!! . . . the business that "Top Hat" is doing at Paramount's Carlton is quite something, and the notices, but terrific!! . . . The press here were a bit dubious about "Midsummer Night's Dream"; they all said it was a grand production but sorta felt that Shakespeare shouldn't ought to be filmed . . . Just what Reinhardt, Warners and not to mention our Basil Dean (who plans two of the Bard's plays for filmic consumption) have to say in reply, we cannot and do not imagine; now if it were Hugh Walpole he would probably out with "I'll take Vanessa", but perhaps we had better skip that one . . .

Virginia Cherrill working here 'on some Fox quickies . . . hm! that Noel Coward song "Don't Put Your Daughter On The Stage, Mrs. Worthington" seems a wee bit obvious for the Public Genius No. 1 of the Entertainment World . . . Gene Markey busy here on his first for Capitol Films—"His Majesty's Pyjamas" . . . despite the American notices we read on "Two for Tonight," the London press "went to town" over the picture and it held at Para's Plaza for a couple good weeks . .

THE Yacht Club Boys are packing in the society and movie celebs at the Cafe de Paris . . . Virginia Cherrill and Doug Montgomery twoing it there . . . ho hum, wouldn't it be a novelty if the British press stopped saying that every visiting film star was "unassuming"; they have used it from Mont-





gomery to March! . . . that was a swell crack Austin Parker made about the Normandie; wish we could print it, but if you'll send a stamped envelope we'll mail it to you! . . . the entertainment world has had a swell season due to the Jubilee Celebrations and it's getting even BETTER with the fall with us; quite amazing!!!

Frances Marion took time out to do a feature on Hollywood for the "Evening News" and interesting, too . . . Edward Everett Horton had his name in lights at three big London first run theatres last week; nice going, Eddie, what do you do with your spare time? . . . Mary Brian a hit in revue here and hoofing, too-right well! . . . Harry Ham, who is the big chief for Selznick-Joyce in this town is showing his clients he is also pretty hot at golf an' bridge! . . . The town's snooties have got Balletomania!!

PRODUCERS looking for a new type player might grab a test of Alastair Simms; quite terrific and very funny . . why is it that if a producer guits his berth at a studio, he is always considering THREE other deals; never two or four but always three!! ?? . . . and another thing while we are in a mean mood, suggestion to Hollywood producers: We can always spot the psuedohidden Federal Dick men in movies now and it is never a surprise to us when the reporter suddenly shows his Government Badge; you see, you always put him in a very light macintosh-trench coat!!

Richard Cromwell is doing the best Garbo this town has seen (or rather, hasn't seen!) in a long while; no one knows where he is or why or what it is all about! . . . Douglass Montgomery stays for two this side . . . orchids, if Winchell doesn't mind, for all youse guys connected with "The Informer"
. . . Jesse Lasky, Junior here for a Gaumont assignment already has gone for a rolled umbrella, he only needs a derby hat and we'll know he is an American!!

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The Return of the Western

THE horse opera is in another of its perennial periods of prosperity. Even the major studios are making them again, although in most cases they call them, not westerns, but epics, and compare them vaguely to "Cimarron".

"Cimarron" was a western which departed from the usual formula and, with heavy exploitation, was sold to a success which has become almost mythical. It established a road which many others have tried to follow.

These so-called "horse operas" travel in waves. One year hardly anybody makes them, and the next, everybody does. While the demand seems to be fairly constant, it has never been matched by the supply.

Western fans are fairly easy to please. Give them a simple story and plenty of action, and they'll provide a moderate but constant revenue. The reason that the epic westerns sometimes roll up such tremendous grosses is that a lot of people who are not ordinarily addicted to this type of picture are persuaded to see them.

This is one of those years when everybody is making westerns. There are

By Lindsley Parsons

... Who writes westerns when he has time to spare from his duties as Director of Publicity for Republic Pictures Corp.

about 16 independent series aiming at the usual market, so the major studios are making pictures in this classification of the epic variety, in hopes of appealing to the larger audience.

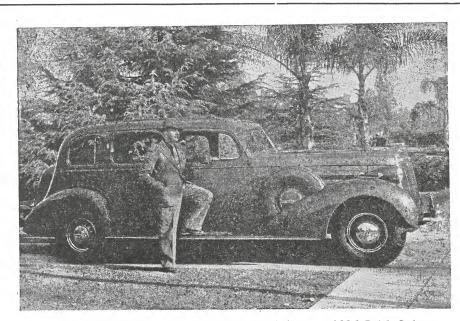
WITH the new western gold rush on, MGM has completed "In Old California", a Joaquin Murietta story with Warner Baxter. RKO recently released a swell grosser entitled "The Arizonian", starring Richard Dix. Warners have announced a series with Dick Foran, and Columbia is making a westerner out of Charles Starrett, ex-Dartmouth footballer. Paramount has augmented its popular Zane Greys with a series of Hopalong Cassidys starring Bill Boyd.

And even Bing Crosby is in for one entitled "Rhythm of the Range". Universal has its "Sutter's Gold" in an early California setting, and also a series of Buck Joneses. Fox remains constant with its George O'Briens.

The comedians also are exploring the western field, with Wheeler and Woolsey scheduled to do "The Wild West". Perhaps the most pretentious of them all, however, is the new De Mille epic about Buffalo Bill Cody.

But Republic really is responsible for starting the year with a bang by making a beautiful scenic western with John Wayne, called "Westward Ho." The picture probably was a surprise to the ghost of Charles Kingsley who had the erroneous impression that "Westward Ho" was a sea story, but the picture went out and made about five times the money of any of its predecessors on the John Wayne series. A lot of people even wrote in and complimented the producers for sticking so closely to the book.

BECAUSE of this success, Republic has added a series of these pictures to the popular Waynes. The new star is Gene Autry, cowboy radio crooner. His pictures are distinguished by plenty of music. At its start, this was an experimental novelty, but it seems to have captured a new western audience.



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There has been progress in the western picture formula, too. Ever since westerns were made first, their essential ingredient has been fast action on horseback. This sometimes was puzzling to audiences who found that if they looked away from the screen for one short second, upon looking back, they had considerable trouble in determining just who was chasing who.

Producer Paul Malvern of the John Waynes has initroduced a novelty which overcomes all this. His astounding innovation consists of placing the forces of Right on white horses, with the corresponding spirits of Wrong on black horses. And so the chase business has been revolutionized.

And what's more, the audiences like it. They have greeted this innovatioin with mighty cheers and an increasing crescendo of coin tinkling at the boxoffice. In time, this move should create distinct breeds of noble, forthright and god-fearing white horses, and mean, vicious and villainous black horses.

An Axe To Cut Actors' Salaries??

(Continued from Page 5)

of theatrical workers to rehabilitate themselves, and give others a chance to receive more training in their art. Mr. Brown talks about training people for the theatre. We definitely are opposed to the use of this money for training purposes. Under government subsidy, a new group of actors will find employment, only to be released within a year to go into competition with recognized players. This is bad, especially since there hardly is enough money to relieve the professional unemployed.

Nevertheless, every force should be exerted, we feel, to maintain the prevailing wage for those working on these projects. (There is no wage for the picture industry, but inasmuch as this is a theatrical project, Equity's standards should be upheld.)

Mrs. Hallie Flanagan, who formerly was a Vassar College official, has consulted with most of the unions concerned: Equity, Stagehand Unions, the Newspaper Guild, etc. The Screen Actors' Guild should, but has not yet been consulted on the local projects. As in the case of most of the other unions with the exception of Equity, it should be represented in some manner in the organization and planning of the projects. While the objection might be raised that the projects are not concerned with screen actors, the law specifies that the Federal Theatre Project should provide employment for "actors". This should include the members

of the Screen Actors' Guild or Equity, at least according to our logic.

Other organizations are represented Ralph Whitehead, on the projects. president of the American Federation of Actors, the union which has jurisdiction over cabaret, hotel and vaudeville entertainment, has been made executive assistant to the director of one of the projects, E. Dowling. Mr. Rice, Regional director for New York, is a member of the Board of Directors of the Dramatists' Guild.

A NOTHER danger of the projects is contained in Mr. Brown's statement that an attempt will be made to create a National Theatre. This might mean that under Government subsidy, a National Little Theatre will be constructed, that can easily grow and replace the professional Legitimate Theatre. In any event, the proposed National Theatre, paying a top salary of \$23.50 per week to its cast, will present serious competition to the Equity operated playhouses, and tend to depress Equity wage levels to a minimum.

However, proper organization can make these projects temporary as they should be, and representation on the various units of members of Equity and the Screen Actors' Guild, we feel, will tend to protect the interests of the theatrical workers.

Likes Proposed Guild Theatre

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Last month I read with much interest your suggestions for a Screen Guild Theatre, and in this month's magazine, Mr. Kinnell's further proposals.

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Screen Writers' Guild

(Continued from Page 14)

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36 New Members

CINCE the last publication of new members in the Magazine, 36 writers have been approved for membership in The Screen Writers' Guild. This brings the total membership of the Guild to well over 800. The 36 new members are as follows:

Joseph Anthony Robert Andrews Paul Burger Harold Buchman Claire Carvalho Doris Denbo Jerome Chodorov Guv Fowler Richard Flournoy Charles Grayson William Heath Lionel Houser William Jacobs Henry Lehrman Horace McCoy Lucile Newmark Seena Owen Carol Parker

Ralph Pettison Samuel M. Pike John Rich Milton Raison Homer Remillard Seymour Robinson Milton Sperling Sidney Salkow Barry Shipman Jane Shore Hamilton Smith Arthur Strawn Dalton Trumbo Sally Unterberger Richard Macaulay Cyril Von Bauman Luci Ward Thyra Samter Winslow

These new members were passed at the meeting of the Board during the past month.

Manuscript Registration

NOPIES of all manuscripts filed with The Screen Writers' Guild Registration Bureau are filed for a period of This presents an effective ten years. means of protecting original stories, scenarios, synopses, etc. for all writers. The fee is 50c to Guild members and \$1.00 to Non-Guild members.

The purpose of the Guild's Registration Bureau is to give the author proof of the priority of his work over any pirated version. The method of achieving this is simple and effective.

COPY of the manuscript is placed A in an envelope, with the registration number, date and time of receipt. This is filed. Ten copies are stamped with the Guild seal, showing the registration number. A charge of five cents is made on each additional copy stamped.

An entry is then made in the Guild's records and thus proof of the date upon which the author's work was completed is provided. No manuscripts are surrendered except upon absolute proof of ownership.

Correct Address Important

THE Guild often is of service to its members in relaying to them studio and agent's calls of offers of assignments. However, during the past month, several such calls could not be delivered because the members had failed to inform the office of their new addresses and telephone numbers.

For your own benefit, therefore, please give The Guild your new telephone number and address immediately. The information is kept strictly confidential.

Best Screen Play

(Continued from Page 2)

have increased, while at the same time, they seem to select less pictures than previously for the awards; while in the first month of the poll, five months ago, 22 pictures received one or more votes, only half that amount were included in the ballots this month.

To date, 29 writers have received credits on the 15 screen plays chosen for First Awards or Honorable Mentions.

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The Junior Guild

(Continued from Page 15)

dio early to don their costumes, and for this, they received no compensation. Under the new interpretation, the studio must plan sufficient time for the extra to change to his costume on studio time! In other words, when an extra is called at nine A. M., he checks in to the studio at nine A. M.

If the studio wishes the extra there earlier to get into costume, or for any other reason, it must start the extra's compensation at the time he checks through the gate. There is no change in the dismissal time ruling.

In Memoriam Charles Morris Jack Wicks

Central Casting Improves Telephone Service

N an attempt to improve its telephone service, Central Casting has installed a new system. A division has been made in the switchboards there resulting in new numbers for different groups. This has been done to facilitate incoming calls and to avoid jamming the switchboard.

In the past several months, Campbell MacCullough has attempted to revise the telephone service at Central Casting as follows:

1. He corrected the situation then existing which made it necessary for extras living in the outlying districts to pay heavy toll charges on their calls to Central Casting.

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2. Additional lines were installed at Central Casting to localize all calls so that five cents is the maximum toll on a call to reach Central from any studio. Formerly, it cost ten cents to call there from pay stations on the Hal Roach, RKO-Pathe, Universal and Warner lots.

3. Station M was placed on a private number so that extras who are requested to call this station can now return the call without having to go through the regular switchboard.

These changes have made it much easier for the extras calling Central Casting. The new change, it is hoped, also will prove a success.

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"Said The White King..."

(Continued from Page 10)

principle that entertainment on the screen demands continuous and highly concentrated points of interest, should be the first to concede that dullness can never be disguised by Prestige.

Lest this discussion appear merely frivolous, it may be pointed out that if motion picture makers wish to present more than the kaleidoscopic surface realities of our times, there are ways of doing so. Hamlet's "I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space" was the imagining of a poet who had only his intuition to lean on, and no instrument and little knowledge, with which to measure the accuracy of his dreaming. Our present knowledge of the physical world—a knowledge little more than thirty years old-offers us on the other hand, countless amazing avenues toward a true cinematic art, revealing the astonishing hidden processes of our own environment. Of these subjects "Arrowsmith" is a minor example—"Pasteur" been projected. To take a real advantage of these opportunities offered by recent discovery means of course giving up the opportunity for self flattery involved in dealing with the works of the dusty past. And in any serious consideration of these new subjects, it may always be questioned whether this artindustry has developed within itself spirits daring enough to make the break and attempt them or genius enough to bring them off.

Life Class

(Continued from Page 11)

actors speak the dialog in sets which are just that—sets—bearing no relation to any place where anyone ever lived.

There is an audience for at least one touch of nature. "Alice Adams" will outgross "Break of Hearts." Audiences took to their hearts the two real people in "Page Miss Glory"—Patsy Kelly and the kibitzing waiter. George Raft tossed a coin in "Scarface." A million people noticed that touch—a human touch—and Raft was a star. I'm convinced that either he or the writers took that piece of business from life.

The studios are constantly on the lookout for material based on uncommon, unusual incidents. The further removed a story is from every day life, the better they seem to like it. Hercules killed a giant by preventing him from touching the earth. How much longer will audiences pay to see our extraordinary characters sit on their extraordinary beam ends in those nevernever land sets, speaking dialog?

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Are Extras People?

(Continued from Page 3)

The first joker added by the writers of the law which the studios found and made use of, is that the law protects only those women making \$15.00 per day or under and \$65.00 per week or under. Probably it was felt that those making more were stronger physically, or more capable of bargaining mentally.

Nevertheless, at any one time, more than one hundred women are employed in Motion Pictures, in "stock" and in "chorus lines," at a salary of \$66.00 (it might just as well be \$65.01!) a week, and these women can be worked, and are in many cases, more than sixteen hours a day. The Junior Guild has records of cases where these women have worked sixteen and more hours a day, every day of a six day week. They have no protection from the law!

The other joker in "Order No. 16-A" is that nowhere is the word emergency defined. The writers of the law felt, probably, that this was unnecessary. Everyone has access to a dictionary. And the meaning of the word is clear if one reads the definition: "An unforeseen occurance or condition calling for immediate action; exigency."

To the extra, an emergency means overtime, and additional pay. Yet, he would prefer to work the regular eight hour day, rest for eight hours, and spend the other eight at play. He knows that his efficiency decreases in a direct ratio the longer he remains on the set. He'll tell you that it is common knowledge that after eight hours at work, more takes are required per scene and more inferior work is photographed—work which later must be done again.

E queried less than twelve of the women members of the Junior Guild for their records on overtime work in the past nine and one-half months—from January 1, 1935 to October 15, 1935. We learned, among other amazing things, that there had been an "emergency" almost every day at one or the other of the eight major studios. There were 262 sets, under 92 different directors, on which anywhere from five to more than two hundred women extras had to work from two to eight hours overtime. This condition exists largely because the law does not define "emergency." And remember. THESE FIGURES ARE BASED ON THE RECORDS OF LESS THAN

TWELVE OF THE FEMALE MEMBERS OF THE JUNIOR GUILD!

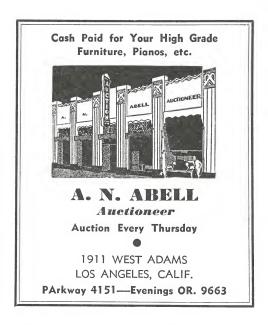
A little arithmetic makes the above even more startling. Because from five to more than two hundred women were employed on each set, we feel it is fair to assume that an average of fifty women were affected by each of the overtime checks listed in this information. THIS MEANS THAT A MINIMUM OF EIGHT THOUSAND INDIVIDUAL CASES OF OVERTIME WORK TOOK PLACE IN THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY IN THE PAST NINE AND ONE-HALF MONTHS.

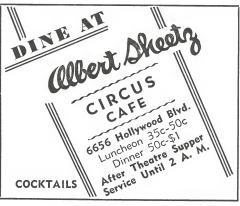
According to the records of the less than a dozen of the women membership of the Junior Guild, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and RKO-Radio each had 49 "emergencies" since January 1. Eighteen directors were responsible for the MGM quota, while 20 contributed to those at RKO. At MGM, 41 of the instances reported were for under two hours of overtime, three for more than two but under four hours, and five for more than four but under six hours. At RKO, 29 of the checks were for under two hours, two for under four but more than two hours, three for under six but more than four hours, and one case represented a misdemeanor under "Order No. 16-A", where 85 women were worked for 17 hours in one day of 24 hours.

ABLE I lists the studio, number of overtime "Emergency" cases, the amount of overtime in each of the four classifications, and the number of directors concerned in the figures. Again repeating excerpts from "Order No. 16-A," a quarter check must be paid
"... For every two hours or fraction thereof after eight hours and up to ten hours . . . '', a half check ". . . For every two hours or fraction thereof after ten hours and up to twelve hours . . . ' a three-quarter check "... for every two hours or fraction thereof after twelve hours and up to fourteen hours . . . " and a full check "... for every two hours or fraction thereof after fourteen hours and up to sixteen hours . . . '

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History of Producer-Talent Relations

(Continued from Page 4)

That the producers were whipped and were now seeking to use the Academy as a smoke screen was too apparent to be questioned. The proposal was accepted by the Academy, with some misgivings, but with the sincere thought that if the conferences could be held in good faith the producers might be prevailed upon to adopt better and more just practices. What a vain hope!

THE first step in the program was a fatal mistake by the talent members of the Academy board. They conceded to the producers the management of the conferences, whereas they should have been conducted impartially by the Academy itself.

The very first session which was with the Actors, revealed what a hollow mockery the whole affair was to be. At the end of the conference room sat ten or a dozen producer representatives trying to appear solemn and judicial, facing thirty representative actors. One at a time the actors were asked to present their ideas, to which the producers listened in stolid silence—not a word of enquiry, not a leading question, not the slightest effort to enter into constructive discussion. It was as if thirty criminals were being permitted to plead that they be not shot at sunrise. When the last actor had spoken the session was adjourned without any illuminating comment whatever.

Similar sessions followed with thirty directors, thirty technicians and thirty writers, all conducted with the producers showing the same owl-like dumbness, meant to be profound and impressive, but really comical to those who could forget their disgust. But despite the forbidding atmosphere, many constructive and valuable ideas were offered and several bold speakers placed the responsibility for conditions squarely on the producers, without provoking a word of reply.

The actors presented many grievances, the correction of which would result in better feeling, better pictures and in several instances less expense. The directors pleaded for a return to the unit system of production. The technicians proposed better engineering methods in studio operations. The writers pointed out costly mistakes made in buying stories and in the manner of their treatment. Speakers in all branches condemned the supervisor system of production.

All of these proposals will now be recognized as valuable, but they

appeared to make no impression on the dummies. Only once did their faces light up with approval and that was when one of the technicians charged the directors with being the bad boys of the business.

The entire series of meetings had been held behind closed doors with a great air of mystery to impress the press and to conceal any damaging statements that might be made. proceedings had been taken down shorthand, at the expense of the gullible Academy, as it later proved, and the transcripts now gather dust in the archives of the institution. The producers merely announced that they would study them and "hand down" their decision at a big dinner which was to be the climax of the farce. It was well known all along that the salary cut was to be cancelled, but the producers wanted to make an event of it as a gesture for the benefit of their bankers and the public. It was to be a love feast with everybody happy and contented.

At a preliminary luncheon at which all branches were represented, it was agreed that a spokesman for each talent branch should pledge his fellows to exert every effort to cooperate in keeping down expenses, and the producer spokesman should then promise that the producers would avail themselves of valuable suggestions offered and would cancel the cut.

THE dinner was well attended, with the press eager for the result. The talent speakers carried out their agreement to the letter, merely pledging hard work and cooperation to save money. But when it came to the producer spokesman, it was found that the paragraph pledging the producers to profit by the proposals of their employes, had been entirely eliminated and a statement had been inserted to the effect that the workers, having solemnly promised not to loaf on their jobs any more, would be held to their words and the producers magnanimously would declare the cut off.

It was thus made to appear that the talent workers were self-confessed culprits, who were now promising to be good, and in this light it was published.

Why was not this typical act of treachery exposed publicly at the time and why did not the Academy fold up and die? It did come very close to it, but there were influential talent members who still thought that the ideal-

istic purpose of the institution could be worked out.

For a time the producers, somewhat ashamed, kept their hands off. When the Equity strike was declared, the Academy promptly and publicly declared itself out of it, on the ground that it was none of the Academy's business. A year later the cameramen formed a union and the Academy again kept itself aloof. There were thus established two precedents, charting the proper policy for the Academy to follow—that is to say, to take no part as a company union or otherwise in opposition to outside, organized efforts to deal with the producers, but on the contrary to cultivate friendly relations with such organizations.

THE standard contract for free-lance actors, set up between the Actors' Branch and the producers, and the machinery established to carry the contract into effect, was not a violation of the foregoing policy, because the failure of Equity had left no outside organization to function. The Academy was merely following its principle of conciliation.

We now know that conciliation only within the Academy is inadequate for craft settlements, although for a time the plan worked very well for the actors, so far as it went. But with the writers it did not work at all. The producers had always held them in contempt and would concede nothing worth while. However, all this was unproven at the time, and for over four years after the ten percent cut fiasco, no occasion arose for a test.

During these four years, the institution was free to pursue its other purposes, to which I have previously referred. It became a tribunal for settling individual disputes with distinct success. As early as 1928 the Technicians' Branch started its valuable program of research and experiments in incandescent lighting for sound pictures, followed by many other technical developments.

Awards of Merit were established for promoting better quality in all picture departments. Relations with colleges and universities were established for mutual benefits and for college classes in motion picture appreciation. By these and other like cultural activities the Academy was on its way to become a dignified institution of national recognition and capable of winning public esteem for the screen and its people, so much so that the producers commenced to open their eyes and Mr. Will Hays felt it necessary to horn in on its management, all of which boded no good for the Academy.

And now there came the untoward events preceding and following NRA, with which you are familiar. The Academy abandoned its fine academic functions, retaining only the Awards of Merit for advertising purposes, and the technical research for business reasons. It plunged into a disgraceful scramble for power. It entered into bitter conflicts with the rejuvenated Screen Writers' Guild and the new Actors' Guild. It wound up as a company union, subsidized and controlled by the producers.

Some of those who remain as members are undoubtedly sincere opponents of unionism in talent affairs. Others still believe the Academy offers at least some relief without conflict. A few may be there to save their jobs. Many of the directors are members because they have no organization of their own.

How much better it might have been, had the institution preserved its dignified academic, cultural and judicial character and had promptly resigned all union purposes to the Guilds, when they became actually representative of the actors and writers, as it had done previously with the cameramen and as it had earlier indicated in the Equity strike? It would now be quite a different and better Academy, would it not?

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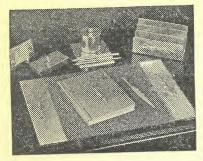
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Weiss Hungarian Csarda
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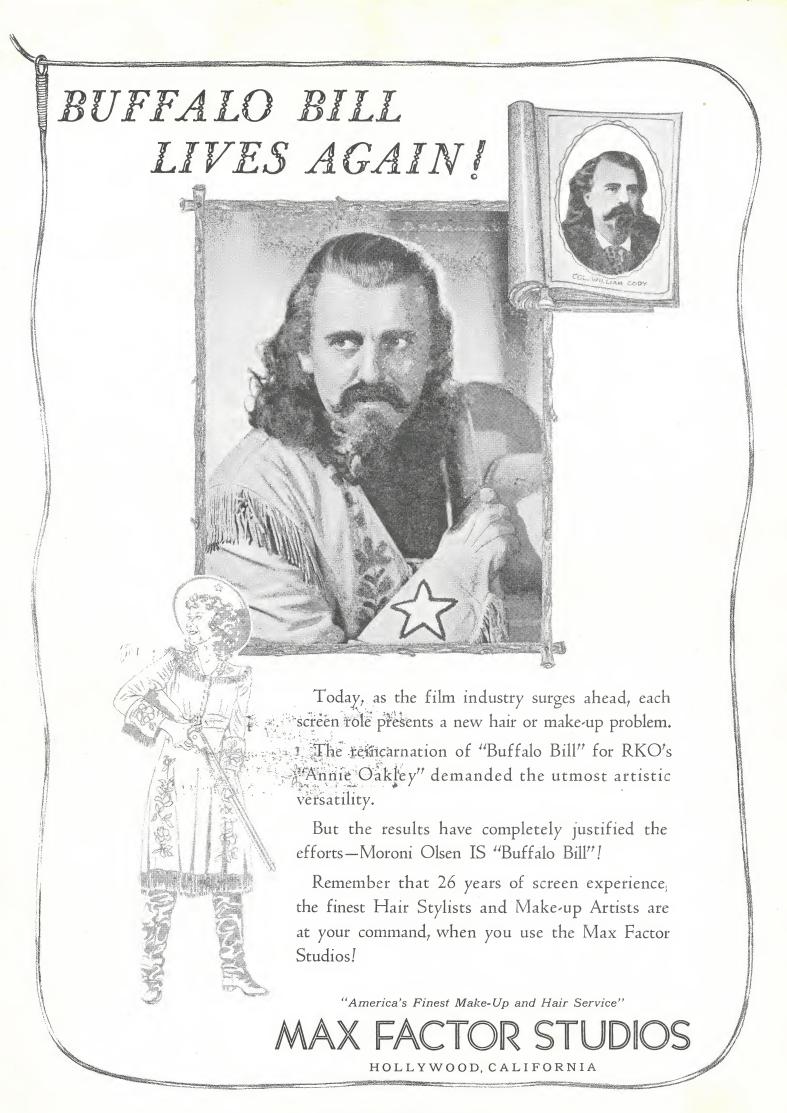
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